

THE HUFFINGTON POST

Let the People of Western Sahara Speak

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Mr. Bardem's concern for Sahrawi refugees in Algeria is laudable. Families have been separated more than 30 years —stranded in bleak desert camps controlled by the Polisario Front, whose leadership hasn't changed in 35 years. These Sahrawis don't have their basic rights under international law—and no future because the Polisario won't negotiate seriously with Morocco under UN auspices to end the Western Sahara conflict.

This impasse has also fueled instability across North Africa and hindered much-needed security cooperation to counter regional terrorist threats.

Key international and regional leaders support a compromise solution granting autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty for the Sahrawis. This plan, endorsed as "serious and credible" by the UN Security Council, is the only "realistic" solution according to the US Congress and three successive Administrations.

Arab Spring reforms must indeed include the Western Sahara, and its voters enthusiastically supported Morocco's new Constitution. With democratic changes in Libya, Tunisia, and across the region, the opportunity is real for international pressure to resolve this conflict and promote regional economic and security cooperation.

Increased attention to the Sahrawis' plight can help put an end to their suffering, if world leaders will broker a compromise solution to a conflict the world can no longer afford to ignore.

Edward M. Gabriel, former US Ambassador to Morocco, is a registered agent of the Kingdom of Morocco. For more information, please visit the Department of Justice in Washington, DC.

2011 OCT 18 AM 10:10
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Friday, Oct. 7, 2011

Fighting for the 'Forgotten': Oscar-Winner Javier Bardem Takes Up Cause for Western Sahara

edgabriel 1950 Oct 13, 2011 - 12:38 PM EDT

Mr. Bardem's concern for the plight facing Sahrawi refugees in bleak desert camps in Algeria is widely shared. For decades, thousands of Sahrawis have been separated from their families in Morocco. With no freedom of movement, they are confined under desperate conditions by the militant Polisario Front, whose leadership hasn't changed for 35 years. Without access to basic rights, their future is in the hands of the Polisario, which refuses to negotiate seriously with Morocco under UN auspices on a realistic solution to the Western Sahara conflict.

The Front won't allow a census in the camps, avoiding accountability for their diversion of international aid that enriches the leadership.

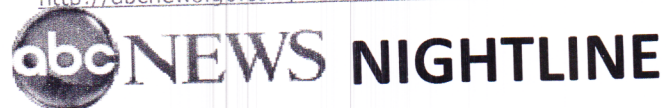
The impasse fuels instability in North Africa, hindering vital security cooperation against terrorist threats from al-Qaeda and others. The path for breaking this deadlock is clear, if key international and regional leaders support Morocco's proposed compromise autonomy solution for Western Sahara under Moroccan sovereignty. It is called "serious and credible" by the United Nations Security Council and "realistic" by Congress and three successive US Administrations.

The Arab Spring promises significant change in the Maghreb, but Algeria's Tindouf camps remain a Cold War legacy that must be resolved through negotiations. International backing for democratic reforms in North Africa and elsewhere is a window of opportunity for international engagement to resolve the Western Sahara conflict, and eliminate a key obstacle to Maghreb economic and security cooperation.

A commitment to resolve the Sahrawi refugees' plight will end their suffering and increase stability in the region, if international and regional leaders take the opportunity to advance a solution to a conflict that can no longer afford be ignored.

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Calvin Dark

From: Moroccan American Center [cdark@moroccanamericancenter.com]
Sent: Friday, October 14, 2011 11:25 AM
To: Calvin Dark
Subject: Morocco Update - October 2011

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October 2011

Moroccan American C e n t e r



Morocco Update - October 2011

Since voting on a new constitution in July 2011, Morocco has undertaken a number of initiatives to promote political reform and economic development in the Kingdom - and has been internationally recognized for many of these achievements. Morocco remains a country truly on the move - here are some of the highlights you may have missed!

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US State Dept: Middle East and North Africa Overview

In its annual country report on terrorism, released in August 2011, the State Department assessed that Morocco has largely succeeded in marginalizing insurgency cells. The report praised Morocco's counterterrorism cooperation with the US and other allies at the regional level, but noted that the Western Sahara conflict remained an impediment to deeper regional counterterrorism cooperation.

<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2010/170257.htm>



US Amb to Morocco praises the solidarity shown by Morocco on the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks

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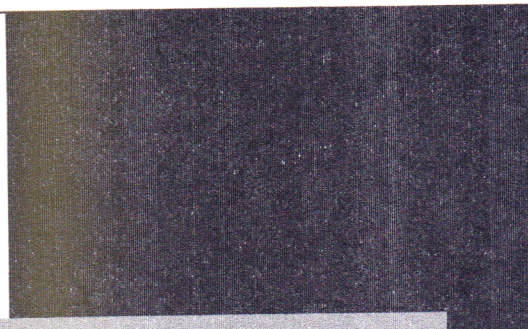
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<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109121548.html>



Distinctive Mission for Muslims' Conference: Remembering the Holocaust



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<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/24/us/distinctive-mission-for-muslims-conference-remembering-the-holocaust.html>

Deauville Partnership Broadens Support for Mideast, North Africa

In September 2011, Morocco was welcomed as a partner in the Deauville Partnership, which seeks to support political and economic transformation in the Middle East and North Africa. Through this partnership, Morocco will work with the IMF and the G-8 to promote the transition to democracy, create jobs, and develop a sustainable economy to confront the challenges of political liberalization. The Partnership has thus far pledged \$80 billion over the next two years to support timely transitions in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, and in return the partner countries have committed to pursuing democratic reforms.

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2011/CAR091011A.htm>

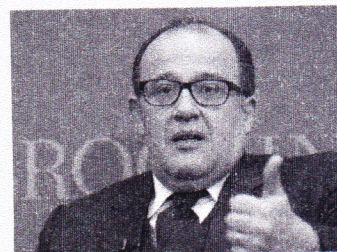
<http://af.reuters.com/article/moroccoNews/idAFS1E78J25J20110921>

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<http://bilaterals.org/spip.php?article20328>



Morocco: GB Supports Govt's Reform Process, Burt Says

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praising the leadership of HM King Mohammed VI.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109250109.html>

<http://www.thenigeriandaily.com/2011/09/25/morocco-gb-supports-govts-reform-process-burt-says/>

Morocco praised for its efforts to fight illegal immigration

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<http://moroccotomorrow.org/2011/09/13/moroccos-immigration-policy-highlighted-at-uk-parliament/>

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<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109180149.html>

Morocco: State Plays 'Positive Role' At International and Regional Levels, Russian Emissary

During a visit to Rabat, Mikhail Margelov, Special Envoy of Dmitri Medvedev, highlighted the positive role that Morocco plays at both the international and regional level.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109190971.html>

Africa: Amnesty International Youths Meet in Bouznika



AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL

Morocco continues to undertake initiatives to promote human rights and reform in the country and the region. In early September, youth members of Amnesty International in Morocco, the Middle East, North, Africa, and the European Union met in Bouznika for an international conference entitled, "Change Our World." The conference aimed to initiate a debate on issues of democracy, citizenship, and human rights, as a means of enabling young people to take ownership of their rights.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109060430.html>

Morocco to host African anti-torture conference

Also in September, Morocco hosted the conference on the prevention of torture in Africa. At the conference, participants discussed new mechanisms against torture undertaken by the African Commission on Human Rights and the United Nations.

http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/awi/newsbriefs/general/2011/09/05/newsbrief-04

Economic Highlights

GCC discusses economic plan for Jordan, Morocco

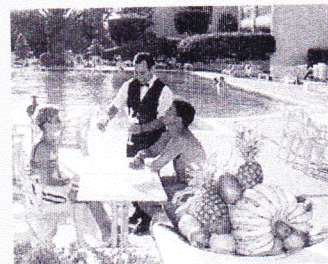
In May 2011, the Gulf Cooperation Council entered into membership discussions with Jordan and Morocco. At a September 2011 follow-up meeting, the parties discussed a five-year economic development plan for the two potential members. Moroccan Foreign Minister Taieb Fassi Fihri noted that his country was, "anxious to have good relations and strong cooperation with the GCC."

<http://www.asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=1&id=26542>

Morocco's tourism industry continues to grow

Morocco has remained an oasis of economic stability in the region, and as such continues to draw tourists and investment from around the globe. Morocco's tourism industry continues to grow, with 5.8 million tourists having visited the country through July 2011, a rise of 3.4% compared to the same period last year.

<http://moroccotomorrow.org/2011/09/06/over-5-million-tourists-visited-morocco-up-to-july-2011/>



Hotel Investment Conference Africa selects Morocco

Morocco's tourism industry has benefited from significant foreign direct investment and the country has been highlighted as a top priority for foreign companies. Recognizing Morocco's tourism potential and its favorable investment climate, the organizers of the annual Hotel Investment Conference Africa selected Morocco to host the 2011 conference in Casablanca.

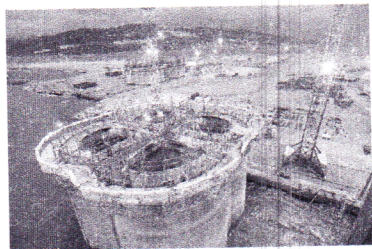
http://www.africa-conference.com/index.php/conference_programme/

Morocco: Goods Exports Increase 19.8 Percent Up to End June 2011

Morocco's goods exports were also up 19.3% through July 2011 compared with the previous year. The rise is primarily attributed to an increase in exports of chemical, metal, and mining products.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201108030334.html>

Revolutionary spirit: Tangier-Med Port in Morocco



The Tangier-Med port has remained exempt from much of the tumult along shipping routes in the Mediterranean. It did not see a drop in cargo during the Arab Spring and remains an important port for transatlantic and Mediterranean shipping, as shipping from Tangier is cost-effective and the port itself is strategically located.

<http://www.portstrategy.com/features101/area-survey/africa2/maghreb-nations/revolutionary-spirit>

L'usine Renault-Tanger Med commencera ses activits partir de janvier 2012

Renault, the French car manufacturer, has taken advantage of Tangier-Med's strategic location to open an industrial complex at the port. The factory is scheduled to commence operations at Tangier-Med in January 2012, with exports beginning as early as April 2012.

<http://moroccotomorrow.org/2011/09/16/lusine-renault-tanger-med-commencera-ses-activits-partir-de-janvier-2012/>

Morocco to begin TGV construction

In other transport news, Morocco will soon begin construction on its first high-speed rail line, the Rabat-Casablanca-Tangier TGV. The TGV is a testament to continued economic growth in Morocco and to the country's efforts to modernize for the future. Expected to be completed in 2015, the TGV will greatly shorten travel time between Casablanca and Tangier. French President Nicolas Sarkozy was in Morocco in late September to oversee the start of construction, highlighting the importance of economic cooperation between France and Morocco. While in Morocco, President Sarkozy underscored France's determination to support Morocco politically and economically and praised the modernizing leadership of King Mohammed VI.

http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/news/awi/newsbriefs/general/2011/09/09/newsbrief-06

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-15103100>

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE78T01C20110930>

Morocco Wins Credit for Economy-Boosting Reforms: Arab Credit

In recognition of this success in attracting foreign direct investment, Morocco has been named the African Country of the Future 2011/2012 by FDI Intelligence, a division of the Financial Times. This designation judges Morocco to be the best investment destination in Africa. In fact, bank lending to Morocco rose at the fastest pace in the Arab World in early 2011. International loans to the country climbed 14% in the first quarter, compared with a .3% increase in the rest of Africa and the Middle East. The Kingdom's continues to weather the political turmoil that has struck the rest of the region.

<http://www.fdiintelligence.com/Rankings>

http://www.yacout.info/Morocco-Wins-Credit-for-Economy-Boosting-Reforms-Arab-Credit_a3751.html



Morocco: Eastern Region Receives Environmental Award in New York

Given its national commitment to the improving its environmentally sustainable economic development, the eastern region of Morocco was given an award from the R20 Regions of Climate Action organization, a non-profit founded by former California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and other global leaders in cooperation with the United Nations. The award recognizes the pioneering role of the Eastern region in launching environment friendly policies and notes that the region may stand as an example for other regions in the Kingdom and in the world.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109201532.html>

Morocco: "A Recognized Microcredit Champion" - Focus

Morocco has been praised as a "recognized microcredit champion," boasting 40% of client outreach in the Arab world. According to Focus, Morocco is also home to some of the best performing microfinance institutions in the world.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109210105.html>

Morocco's Mhammed Abbad Andaloussi receives in New York Global Citizenship Award of 'Clinton Global Initiative'

Similarly, Morocco's civilian leaders have been recognized for their actions to promote sustainable human development within the Kingdom. On September 22, Mhammed Abbad Andaloussi received the Global Citizenship Award from the Clinton Global Initiative for his efforts to improve the Moroccan education system. His two projects, which established collaboration between the business community and the education community, were praised by Former President Clinton as, "a model for the Arab world and even for the United States."

<http://www.almaghariba.com/component/content/article/86-moroccan-news/12791-moroccos-mhammed-abbad-andaloussi-receives-in-new-york-global-citizenship-award-of-clinton-global-initiative>

North Africa: IMF Expects a Growth of 4.6 Percent in Morocco in 2011

Despite difficulties in the global economy, Morocco's economy is expected to grow in 2011. The Bank Al Maghrib, Morocco's Central Bank, expects economic growth between 4.5% and 5.5 % in 2011. The International Monetary Fund echoed this calculation, forecasting economic growth of 4.6% in Morocco in 2011. Morocco also plans to lower its budget deficit to 4% of GDP in 2012.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109210138.html>

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109210140.html>

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-09-22/morocco-plans-to-lower-budget-deficit-next-year-reuters-reports.html>

Africa: UNDP and Morocco, Senegal, Mauritania, Gabon Sign MOU to Promote South-South Cooperation

Given its economic position, Morocco is well-placed to promote development on the rest of the African continent. As a means of promoting South-South cooperation, Morocco, Senegal, Mauritania, and Gabon signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Development Program in late September. The MOU aims to promote bilateral cooperation on development issues.

<http://theafricanstar.com/?p=2635>

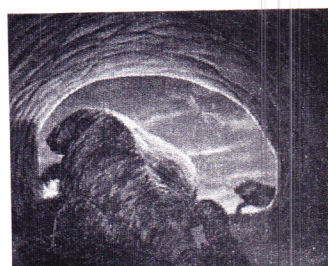
Other News

Morocco declared Malaria Free

Morocco's efforts to promote development in the Kingdom have improved living standards across the country. In mid-September, the country was declared malaria-free by Roll Back Malaria and the World Health Organization.

<http://riadzany.blogspot.com/2011/09/morocco-declared-malaria-free.html>

A sophisticated underground animal world existed 240 million years ago in Morocco



The original Maghrebi has been found! Scientists recently discovered a sophisticated underground animal world in Morocco that existed 240 million years ago. The pre-dino subterranean world, made up of tunnels and chambers and inhabited by stout four-legged animals which pre-date dinosaurs, is the second oldest in the world, only being predated by similar structures in South Africa. The discovery marks an important step in human understanding of times past.

<http://news.discovery.com/animals/pre-dinosaur-burrows-110913.html>

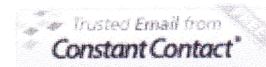
TANJAzz Festival de Jazz de Tanger Maroc

In cultural news, Tangier recently hosted the 11th annual TANJAzz Festival, held from September 21-25. The TANJAzz festival brought together artists from all over the globe for a week of jazz in the charming city of Tangier.

<http://www.tanjazz.org/>

This material is distributed by the Moroccan American Center for Policy on behalf of the Government of Morocco. Additional

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Moroccan American C e n t e r



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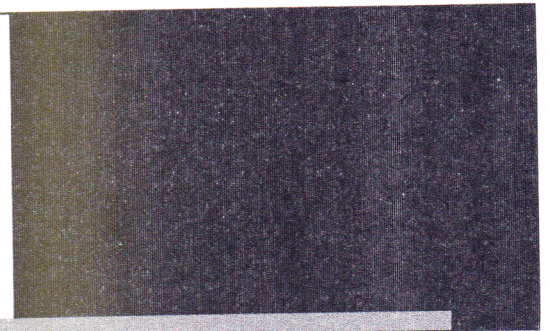


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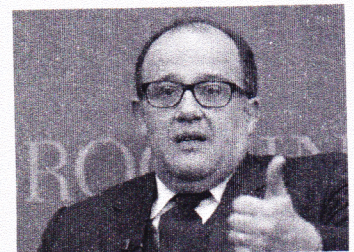
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<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109060430.html>

Morocco to host African anti-torture conference

Also in September, Morocco hosted the conference on the prevention of torture in Africa. At the conference, participants discussed new mechanisms against torture undertaken by the African Commission on Human Rights and the United Nations.

http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/awi/newsbriefs/general/2011/09/05/newsbrief-04

Economic Highlights

GCC discusses economic plan for Jordan, Morocco

In May 2011, the Gulf Cooperation Council entered into membership discussions with Jordan and Morocco. At a September 2011 follow-up meeting, the parties discussed a five-year economic development plan for the two potential members. Moroccan Foreign Minister Taieb Fassi Fihri noted that his country was, "anxious to have good relations and strong cooperation with the GCC."

<http://www.asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=1&id=26542>

Morocco's tourism industry continues to grow

Morocco has remained an oasis of economic stability in the region, and as such continues to draw tourists and investment from around the globe. Morocco's tourism industry continues to grow, with 5.8 million tourists having visited the country through July 2011, a rise of 3.4% compared to the same period last year.

<http://moroccotomorrow.org/2011/09/06/over-5-million-tourists-visited-morocco-up-to-july-2011/>



Hotel Investment Conference Africa selects Morocco

Morocco's tourism industry has benefited from significant foreign direct investment and the country has been highlighted as a top priority for foreign companies. Recognizing Morocco's tourism potential and its favorable investment climate, the organizers of the annual Hotel Investment Conference Africa selected Morocco to host the 2011 conference in Casablanca.

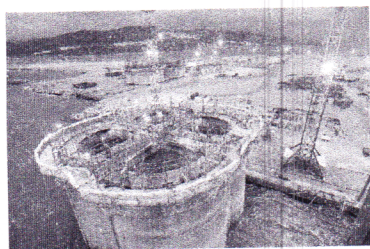
http://www.africa-conference.com/index.php/conference_programme/

Morocco: Goods Exports Increase 19.8 Percent Up to End June 2011

Morocco's goods exports were also up 19.3% through July 2011 compared with the previous year. The rise is primarily attributed to an increase in exports of chemical, metal, and mining products.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201108030334.html>

Revolutionary spirit: Tangier-Med Port in Morocco



The Tangier-Med port has remained exempt from much of the tumult along shipping routes in the Mediterranean. It did not see a drop in cargo during the Arab Spring and remains an important port for transatlantic and Mediterranean shipping, as shipping from Tangier is cost-effective and the port itself is strategically located.

<http://www.portstrategy.com/features101/area-survey/africa2/maghreb-nations/revolutionary-spirit>

L'usine Renault-Tanger Med commencera ses activits partir de janvier 2012

Renault, the French car manufacturer, has taken advantage of Tangier-Med's strategic location to open an industrial complex at the port. The factory is scheduled to commence operations at Tangier-Med in January 2012, with exports beginning as early as April 2012.

<http://moroccotomorrow.org/2011/09/16/lusine-renault-tanger-med-commencera-ses-activits-partir-de-janvier-2012/>

Morocco to begin TGV construction

In other transport news, Morocco will soon begin construction on its first high-speed rail line, the Rabat-Casablanca-Tangier TGV. The TGV is a testament to continued economic growth in Morocco and to the country's efforts to modernize for the future. Expected to be completed in 2015, the TGV will greatly shorten travel time between Casablanca and Tangier. French President Nicolas Sarkozy was in Morocco in late September to oversee the start of construction, highlighting the importance of economic cooperation between France and Morocco. While in Morocco, President Sarkozy underscored France's determination to support Morocco politically and economically and praised the modernizing leadership of King Mohammed VI.

http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/news/awi/newsbriefs/general/2011/09/09/newsbrief-06

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-15103100>

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE78T01C20110930>

Morocco Wins Credit for Economy-Boosting Reforms: Arab Credit

In recognition of this success in attracting foreign direct investment, Morocco has been named the African Country of the Future 2011/2012 by FDI Intelligence, a division of the Financial Times. This designation judges Morocco to be the best investment destination in Africa. In fact, bank lending to Morocco rose at the fastest pace in the Arab World in early 2011. International loans to the country climbed 14% in the first quarter, compared with a .3% increase in the rest of Africa and the Middle East. The Kingdom's continues to weather the political turmoil that has struck the rest of the region.

<http://www.fdiintelligence.com/Rankings>

http://www.yacout.info/Morocco-Wins-Credit-for-Economy-Boosting-Reforms-Arab-Credit_a3751.html



Morocco: Eastern Region Receives Environmental Award in New York

Given its national commitment to the improving its environmentally sustainable economic development, the eastern region of Morocco was given an award from the R20 Regions of Climate Action organization, a non-profit founded by former California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and other global leaders in cooperation with the United Nations. The award recognizes the pioneering role of the Eastern region in launching environment friendly policies and notes that the region may stand as an example for other regions in the Kingdom and in the world.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109201532.html>

Morocco: "A Recognized Microcredit Champion" - Focus

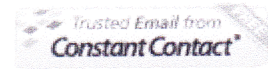
Morocco has been praised as a "recognized microcredit champion," boasting 40% of client outreach in the Arab world. According to Focus, Morocco is also home to some of the best performing microfinance institutions in the world.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201109210105.html>

Morocco's Mhammed Abbad Andaloussi receives in New York Global Citizenship Award of 'Clinton Global Initiative'

Similarly, Morocco's civilian leaders have been recognized for their actions to promote sustainable human development within the Kingdom. On September 22, Mhammed Abbad Andaloussi received the Global Citizenship Award from the Clinton Global Initiative for his efforts to improve the Moroccan education system. His two projects, which established collaboration between the business community and the education community, were praised by Former President Clinton as, "a model for the Arab world and even for the United States."

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